

Having Loren as an older brother always felt a bit like having a local legend in the house—part hero, part troublemaker, and always unforgettable. Mention his name at school and you'd get one of two reactions: an excited “No way!” or a cautious step backward.

In truth, I didn't know Loren all that well during those early years. He was often holed up in his room, while I was just the little sister orbiting around his unpredictable energy. Still, the memories that stuck were intense, strange, and sometimes hilarious.

When we were very young, Loren loved testing how gullible I was. He once convinced me to shove a bead up my nose, cover our bedroom floor with baby powder like it was snow, and sneak into a neighbor's pool without permission. He thrived on chaos, and I often ended up caught in his experiments. As Loren grew older, he became more elusive, especially in his teenage years. I remember my mom's frustration mounting as he got suspended from school every single year starting in sixth grade. Some incidents were minor—like getting targeted after standing up to a bully—but others were more... theatrical. Once, he handed out supplements to other kids. Another time, he threatened to “eat” his girlfriend with a knife because he didn't know how to break up with her. Loren never crossed the line into truly dangerous territory, but he often danced on its edge.

One day I came home to find him with a large needle sticking through his eyebrow. Impatient to get a piercing, he did it himself. Another time, the police knocked on our door asking for him—he'd been trespassing in some half-built condos. It was never malicious, just classic Loren: impulsive, dramatic, and oddly principled. He'd never hurt anyone without provocation, and our dad's anti-violence philosophy was something we both held onto, even amid the chaos.

As he got older, Loren became a bit of a ladies' man—especially with the emo and goth crowd. I'd meet his girlfriends, many of whom seemed more interested in molding him than loving him. One neighbor girl dressed him in women's clothes and makeup just for fun. Another time, he let someone jab a knife into a staph infection on his arm. He was always ok to go along with whatever other people wanted to do and it was always a thought of, “What will he do next?”

The first truly unforgettable moment came after our parents divorced and we moved into the house where most of our childhood played out. Loren was nine when he split his head open on the corner of the staircase. I don't remember the exact circumstances—just the panic, the blood, and the sound of staples stitching his scalp together. I still hear it sometimes.

Through it all, Loren remained a paradox: known by everyone, understood by few. While others saw a troublemaker, I witnessed someone looking for his place in a

world that didn't know what to do with him. Our relationship didn't deepen until adulthood, but even then, those early memories remain as loud and vivid as he always was.